

**Lesson
1**

Agreement in Number

Teaching

A verb must agree with its subject in number. **Number** refers to whether a word is singular (naming one) or plural (naming more than one).

A singular subject takes a singular verb.

Jon enjoys adventure. (singular subject, singular verb)

A plural subject takes a plural verb.

Adventurous people enjoy travel. (plural subject, plural verb)

In a sentence with a verb phrase, the first helping verb must agree with the subject.

He has hiked the Grand Canyon, and they have gone white-water rafting.

The **contractions** *doesn't* and *don't* are short forms of *does not* and *do not*. Use *doesn't* with all singular subjects except *I* and *you*. Use *don't* with all plural subjects, *I*, and *you*.

Doesn't the Grand Canyon look beautiful?

Don't people ride donkeys or horses to the bottom of the Grand Canyon?

Making Subjects and Verbs Agree in Number

In each sentence, underline the subject. Then underline the verb in parentheses that agrees with the subject.

1. Volcanoes (erupts, erupt) in countries all over the world.
2. Some people (watches, watch) volcanoes.
3. They try to predict when a volcano (is, are) going to erupt.
4. The watchers (warns, warn) the people who live nearby.
5. The closest towns' residents (moves, move) to a safer area.
6. A volcano watcher (has, have) an opportunity to save lives.
7. In addition, watchers (gathers, gather) information for scientists.
8. This activity (is, are) very dangerous.
9. Some volcano watchers (is, are) killed at work.
10. A watcher (has, have) to be extremely careful.

B. Identifying Subjects and Verbs That Agree in Number

In each sentence, underline the subject and the verb. On the line following the sentence, write whether the two parts of the sentence **Agree** or **Disagree** in number.

1. Juggling are not easy. _____
2. The activity require a lot of practice. _____
3. The world's best jugglers throw as many as ten balls. _____
4. Jugglers uses balls, hoops, or clubs. _____
5. Many performers include juggling in their acts. _____

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More Practice

A. Making Subjects and Verbs Agree in Number

On the line following each sentence, write the present tense form of the verb that agrees with the subject.

1. Mountain climbing (be) a sport of climbing to the summit of mountains. _____
2. People (climb) mountains for many reasons. _____
3. Climbing (appeal) to many people's sense of adventure. _____
4. Other people (be) attracted by the challenge of scaling difficult slopes. _____
5. A climber (need) extensive training. _____
6. A beginner (practice) on cliffs that are easier to climb. _____
7. Mountain climbers (keep) themselves in top physical condition. _____
8. A climber (learn) how to use specialized equipment. _____
9. Most climbing accidents (happen) to people who lack training and experience. _____
10. Otherwise, mountain climbing accidents (be) rare. _____

B. Correcting Agreement Errors

In each sentence, underline the subject once and the verb twice. If the verb agrees with the subject, write **Correct** on the line to the right. If it does not agree, write the correct verb.

1. My mother bakes delicious apple pies. _____
2. Tim's sunburn feel painful. _____
3. The steak was as tough as shoe leather. _____
4. The band members practices every day. _____
5. In my garden, the first flowers has bloomed. _____
6. Every year, my aunt sends me interesting gifts. _____
7. I has never visited our state capital. _____
8. We enjoys watching the sunset at the beach. _____
9. Lisa and Heidi is co-editors of the school newspaper. _____
10. A kangaroo carry its young in a pouch. _____

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Application

A. Proofreading for Errors in Agreement

Underline the five verbs in this paragraph that do not agree with their subjects. On the lines below, write the numbers of the sentences in which you find agreement errors. After each sentence number, write the subject and the verb form that agrees with it.

(1) Astronauts risk their lives working in space. (2) The word *astronaut* comes from the Greek language. (3) The Greek words means *sailor among the stars*. (4) Pilot astronauts command the spacecraft. (5) Mission specialists conducts experiments. (6) All astronauts has been trained for weightlessness. (7) They experiences the near absence of gravity on large airplanes. (8) For about 30 seconds, they float weightlessly as the plane climbs and dives. (9) All the astronauts is asked to prove their physical and mental fitness. (10) For everyone who becomes an astronaut, the training process is a long one.

B. Making Subjects and Verb Agree in Writing

Choose one of the topics below and write a paragraph of at least four sentences about it. Use the present tense throughout. Make sure the subjects and verbs of all the sentences agree.

A visit to a planetarium
Life on other planets
A trip to the moon
Using a telescope

Living on a space station
Walking in space
Being weightless
Why I want to be an astronaut